

III. REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 1, 6, 17, 23 and 25 have been amended. Claims 5, 22, and 26-30 have been canceled. These amendments are being made to facilitate early allowance of the presently claimed subject matter. Applicant does not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections and reserves the right to present specific arguments regarding any rejected claims not specifically addressed. Further, Applicant reserves the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the original claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of this Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. 1.116(b) because the Amendment: (a) places the application in condition for allowance as discussed below; (b) does not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration; and (c) places the application in better form for appeal. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of this Amendment.

In the Office Action, claims 26 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Chatterjee (U.S. Patent No. 5,774,661), hereafter "Chatterjee." Claims 1, 4, 7, 9, 13, 15-17, 20, 21, 24, 25 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Chatterjee in view of Aspen Technology "Aspen Engineering Suite" (Business Wire, "Aspen Technology Introduces Aspen Engineering Suite", May 1998, pp. 1-4), hereafter "Aspen." Claims 27 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Chatterjee in view of in view of Du. Claims 2, 3, 18, 19, 5, 6, 8, 14, 10, 11, 12, 22, and 23 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant gratefully appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter.

With regard to the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejections over Chatterjee in view of Aspen, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 17 to include subject matter of claims 5 and 22, respectively, indicated as being allowable by the Office. In addition, Applicant has amended claim 25 to include subject matter of claim 2 that is indicated by the Office as being allowable. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims are in condition for allowance.

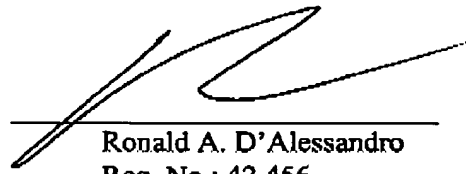
IV. CONCLUSION

In addition to the above arguments, Applicant submits that each of the pending claims is patentable for one or more additional unique features. To this extent, Applicant does not acquiesce to the Office's interpretation of the claimed subject matter or the references used in rejecting the claimed subject matter. Additionally, Applicant does not acquiesce to the Office's combinations and modifications of the various references or the motives cited for such combinations and modifications. These features and the appropriateness of the Office's combinations and modifications have not been separately addressed herein for brevity. However, Applicant reserves the right to present such arguments in a later response should one be necessary.

In light of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner require anything further to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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